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DORI'S QUEST



By Dori Manela | Monday, May 16, 2011 | Updated 11:42 AM EDT

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Loren Bassett, instructor of Bassett's Bootcamp

I just experienced the hardest workout of my life. And yet I don't feel like I pushed myself to my limit. I'll explain.

Pure Yoga invited me to a special workshop at their East Side location called [Bassett's Bootcamp with Loren Bassett](#). According to the description, it will boost your metabolism and burn calories by combining hot power yoga, high-intensity cardio intervals, strength training and intense core work.

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I am not usually a hot yoga person. I've taken hot yoga a few times before, but my neurosis about things touching me while I work out – makeup, jewelry, certain types of clothing and, yes, sweat – have always caused me to feel uncomfortable in an environment where I feel sweat oozing and dripping everywhere.

But the rest of the description sounded incredible to me and I couldn't pass this up. A friend of mine warned me to "brace myself." I was nervous, but excited.

Loren Bassett introduced herself and chatted with the students before class. I always feel less intimidated at a new place when the instructor is so welcoming.

When I entered the room, it was all set up for each student – and what a set-up it was. In my space, I had the following: a special sticky hot yoga mat, four small towels, one large towel, two yoga blocks and two five-pound dumbbells that were made out of what felt like bean bags. I'd never seen weights like those and was excited to see how they would be used.

The 75-minute class began with standard yoga asanas and vinyasas and progressed into the most challenging yoga sequence I have ever done: mixed in with yoga poses were strength exercises, such as push-ups, low pulsing lunges and fast squat intervals.

To my disappointment, we only used the bean bag weights once. But I loved how we used them: while holding a plank with our hands on the weight, moving from a push-up to a row, back to a push-up to a row on the other side. While I love strengthening combinations like that, I was unable to get into the work to the best of my ability because I was so overwhelmed by the heat and the sweat.

I often found myself skipping exercises in favor of toweleling off, or not being able to fully do some of the sections – like jump-backs, which I love – because it was just too slippery and my heart was racing in the heat. When I made the effort my muscles were on fire, but I felt a little nauseous since I am not used to these temps, and I took multiple Child's Pose breaks.

That said, Loren was a wonderful instructor, always coming around to correct my form in ways that improved the entire pose. I have incredible respect for the other students in this class. I like to think I am in pretty good shape, and I often feel that way in my favorite classes like [Refine Method](#) or [Core Fusion Cardio](#), but the people who choose to take Bassett's Bootcamp are on a different level.

I really do think this class would be a more perfect workout – and more accessible to people at all levels of fitness – in a non-heated room. Bassett's Bootcamp is the most magnificent combination of traditional yoga with strength and cardio interval training I've seen. But because of the temperature, I feel like I performed the strength aspects far less than I am capable. Of course, I am sure many people want the calorie-burning and muscle-loosening boost of the heated room – but when I work out, I like to make sure my form is perfect and I am pushing myself to the max. I was unable to focus on either here, and I left feeling simultaneously defeated yet wanting more.



Dori Manela is a writer, content manager and social media consultant. Raised in Queens, Dori now lives in [Manhattan](#), taking as many exercise classes in NYC as possible in search of the perfect workout. She started [Dori's Shiny Blog](#) in November 2007. As her passion for fitness grew, DSB turned into a health & fitness blog. With the help of her favorite social networking site [Twitter](#), Dori has connected with other bloggers, boutique fitness studios, companies and readers to share her love of working out.

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